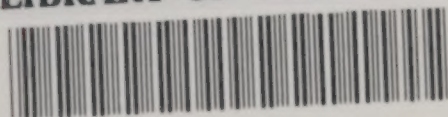


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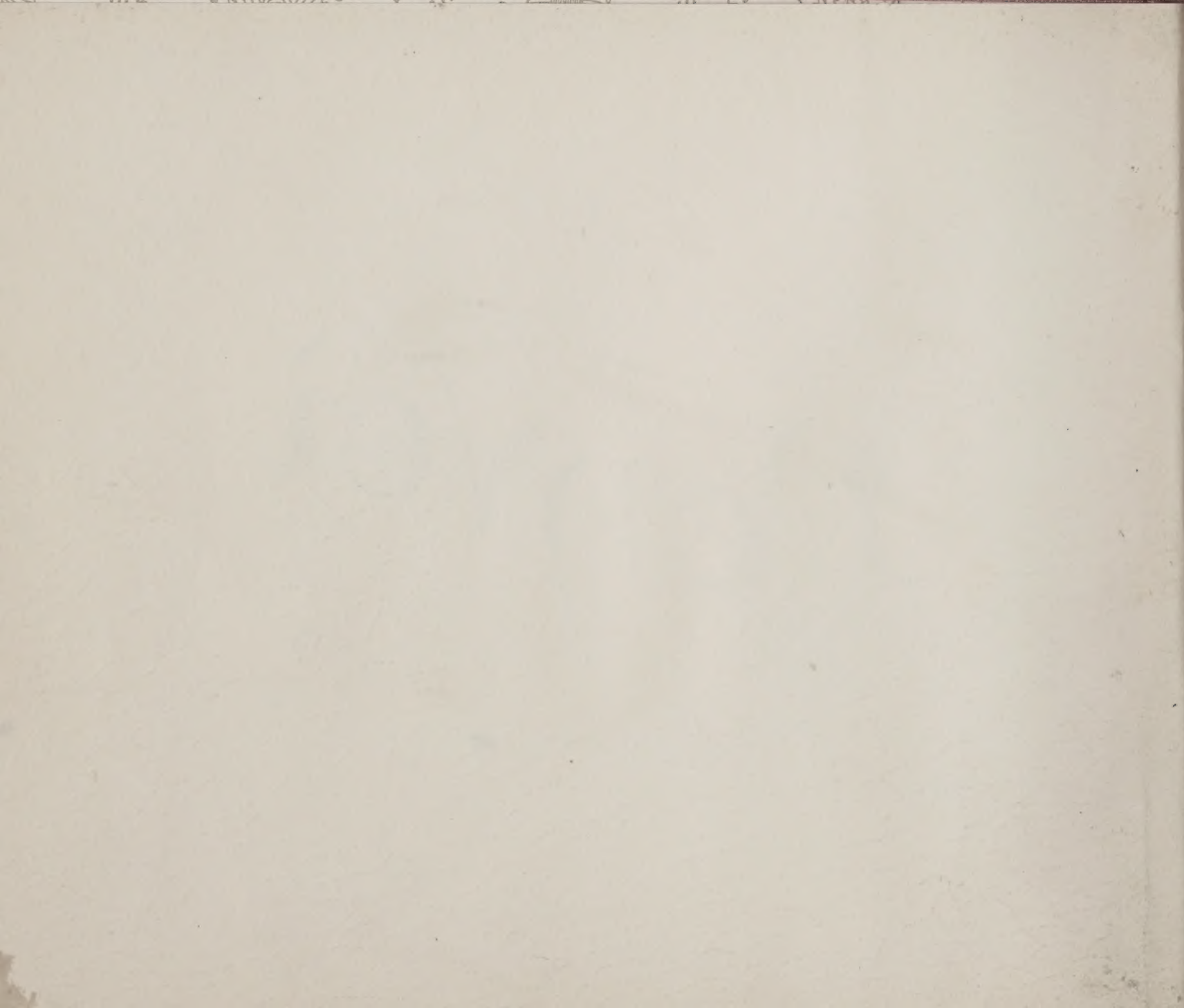


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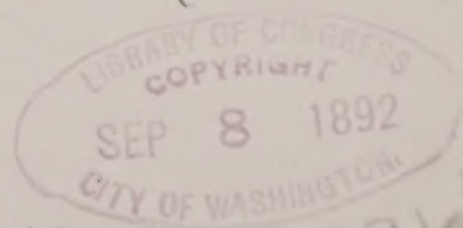
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By
Mrs-H-A-
Bingham-

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Mrs. Harriet A. Townsend



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The passing bell proclaims it here—
The mystic midnight of the year,
Sacred to death and birth.

In silence comes a year new-given,
In silence goes the dead unshriven
To all the past of earth.

No click upon the wheel of time
That marks the centuries sublime—
No sound, no sign, is given.
So glide a thousand years away.
Serene as one unbroken day—
The endless day of heaven.



Above, the calm and holy air,
Below, the earth all silver-fair
All cold, and clear, and white,
Starry, and dim, and heavenly still,
The night goes on at His great will,
Maker of night and light.

In vast procession, grand and slow,
The mighty constellations go
Across their upper deep:
Beneath their still, unfaltering eyes
Our little world untroubled lies,
A weary child asleep.

O un little world, and yet how wide,—
What stretch of lands and seas divide
Beneath the selfsame skies!
How long is time, how wide is space,
Measured from one small hiding-place
In these immensities!

Out to the sweet and soothing night
I lean a face, with stars alight,
And think of all I love.
On near, or far my swift thought runs
And circles round its chosen ones
Like the great thought above.

Not these alone, but all who lie
At rest beneath the guardian sky
While tumults pause and cease
My taper sends its glow-worm spark
Into the great world's outer dark
With hail of love and peace.



friends beloved, God keep you all!

Softly my prayers and blessings fall

On each unconscious head.

Your eyes from tears, your hearts from pain,

Your homes with joy, your store with gain.

Be kept and comforted.

Live on, beloved, that life may be
The richer for your ministry—
One brightness far and near:

I dare not dream, you cannot know,
How poor were earth if you should go
Out of its light and cheer.

And you, unloved because unknown,

Whose hearts still beat with mine as one,

God bless you all to-night!

Your unknown dreams, your unheard prayers,

Your secret hopes, and fears, and cares,

Be precious in His sight.

And if there be some hearts estranged,

Who deem me false, who find me changed,
Whose love from mine is riven,

O friends, where'er the blame may lie,

Let it tonight forever die—

Forgive and be forgiven.

There is no room for strife and hate,
We are so small, and God so great,
And His all wrongs redress.
Forget the blind, unworthy seed,
Remember each heart's sorest need,
Pity and tenderness.

There's not enough of love to lose,
There's not enough of joy to choose,
That we should miss the least.
But love need ask no doubtful leave;
She still can give though none receive,
And find the giving blest.

O hearts that on my own take hold,
O hearts indifferent and cold.

One blessing on you fall.

Life is so weak, and fate so strong,
And joy so short, and grief so long.

God help and shield you all!

O Kindred of one common blood,
I give you pledge of brotherhood,
Sworn to the heaven above
The word is poor, the gift is small,
Broken and vain the deeds may fall,
The will is all of love.

W 13



